

ARTICLE
EXCERPTED
FROM:

ISQ

INFORMATION STANDARDS QUARTERLY

SPRING 2009 | VOL 21 | ISSUE 2 | ISSN 1041-0031

SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY EDITION: PART TWO

THE DAISY STANDARD:
MAINSTREAMING
ACCESSIBILITY

LINKING TO LIBRARY
RECORDS WITH OPENURL
AND OPENBOOK

IN SEARCH OF BEST
PRACTICES FOR
PRESENTATION OF
E-JOURNALS

WHAT IS THE
FUTURE OF VIDEO
AND STANDARDS?

STREAMLINING BOOK
METADATA WORKFLOW

REGINA ROMANO REYNOLDS & CINDY HEPFER

IN SEARCH OF BEST PRACTICES

— FOR THE PRESENTATION OF E-JOURNALS —



TICES

Pretend that you are in college. You are a pre-med biology major suffering through a required American history course. You have to write a term paper and since you have a cousin serving in the army in Iraq, you have chosen as your topic diseases that have been encountered by soldiers serving in the U.S. military.

In an October 2000 issue of *Military Medicine*, you find an article that interests you: "The Results of Hookworm Disease Prophylaxis in Brazil." The citation for the article in question is given as: Am J Hyg 1922; 2: 77-95. You don't really understand what that citation means and you wonder how you can get the article in any case, since a) you live and study in Buffalo, b) there are three feet of snow on the ground and the temperature is 3 degrees above zero, c) it's New Year's weekend, so the public library and university libraries are both closed, and d) the holidays have flown by and the paper is due January 4, the day that school resumes—five days from now. Fortunately, you have electricity, a warm place to work, and Internet access. It occurs to you that you ought to be able to locate the article online.

CONTINUED »

There are numerous improvements that can be made to many journal websites—even to some of the very best—since publishers often omit from their websites information that they publish in their printed issues.

You aren't sure what *Am J Hyg* stands for, so you google that phrase. What you retrieve is a website for *The American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene*. That's a bit puzzling—why does the abbreviation appear to skip over important words? As you stare at the website you retrieved, you notice that it offers an option to “Select an issue from the archive, January 1921-March 2009.” The article that you wanted was published in 1922, so maybe this somehow is the right journal. You click on 1922 and find that there are six issues. However, after looking at the available issues for 1922 and your citation, you realize that the pagination in the citation and the pagination available online don't coincide; this apparently is not the right journal after all. But just to be sure, you use the search feature available on the journal's homepage and get no hits. It's the end of the road.

Or is it? You have endured boring “bibliographic instruction” sessions in English 101, so you have some rudimentary knowledge of how to search the university's online catalog. You log onto the library's homepage and click on the catalog search. You once again type in *Am J Hyg*, and this time you get 4 hits: *American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene*—a title you already know is a dead end—plus *American Industrial Hygiene Association Journal*, *Journal of the American Dental Hygienists Association*, and one that makes very good sense: *American Journal of Hygiene*. Alas, however, *American Journal of Hygiene* is only available in print, and it is in the library's “Annex,” whatever that is. You reluctantly give up on the article because clearly you are not going to get what you want today, and you don't have sufficient time to pursue an interlibrary loan.

In reality, *American Journal of Hygiene*, often cited as *Am J Hyg*, changed title in 1965 to *American Journal of Epidemiology*. The university's catalog offers online access to the later title starting with the late 1990s. Had it been obvious at any point during your search that *American Journal of Hygiene* was, in fact, what *American Journal of Epidemiology* was called from 1921-1964, you would have had a chance of finding your way to the article in question. For example, you could have used the search box available on the *American Journal of Epidemiology*'s website; in this case, you would have retrieved the desired paper. Or you might have browsed the journal's archive and found the article in question in the first issue of 1922. While you would not have been able to pull up the PDF because the library had not purchased the backfile that includes 1922, you could have used a credit card to buy access to the article and therefore have been able to immediately get on with the business of writing the paper. Unfortunately, googling *Am J Hyg* did not retrieve *American Journal of Epidemiology*, even though the first 79 volumes of that title were published and cited as *American Journal of Hygiene*. So, you remained unaware that you could have accessed the paper; the library failed to help you access what you were looking for; and the publisher lost a potential sale.

Critical Elements for the Presentation of Journals on Websites

Some publishers seem to do a wonderful job of presenting journals on websites. They include the journal's title, ISSN, volume and issue numbers and their corresponding dates, PDF and html versions of each article, a search feature, and the name of the publisher and the sponsoring bodies. What more could anyone ask for?

In fact, one could and should ask for a great deal more. There are numerous improvements that can be made to many journal websites—even to some of the very best—since publishers often omit from their websites information that they publish in their printed issues. But this article will focus on title presentation and citation practices because, as has been described, unless journal websites list all the titles under which content was published, user access to desired content is considerably diminished. No one wins: not the library, the publisher, the vendor, and certainly not the researcher!

What Can Be Done?

The main purpose of this article is to raise awareness of journal title presentation and citation issues and to spark interest in development of a NISO best practices document. Following are some of the challenges inherent in current journal title presentation practices, challenges that a NISO best practices document could address by providing both background information and recommendations.

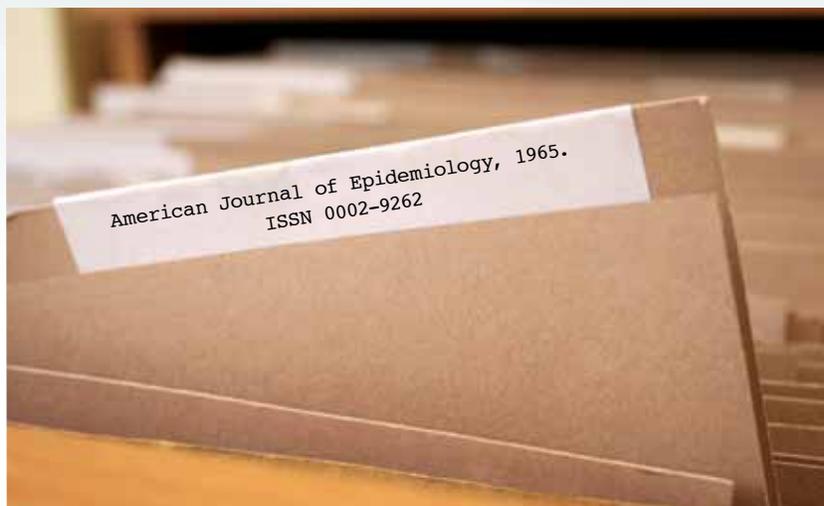
The Library Perspective

In order to better understand this problem from a library perspective, it is necessary to understand how libraries regard journal titles and title changes. Since 1971, most U.S. libraries have followed cataloging rules that require each significantly changed title of a journal to be cataloged as a separate record; the result is that libraries effectively consider a changed title to have become a new journal for identification, control, and inventory purposes. Additionally, each significantly changed title—following the same rules as those in cataloging—requires a new ISSN. Thus, ISSN and library cataloging records generally align well.

One result of the fact that libraries and the ISSN Network consider a changed title to be a new title is that libraries count each significantly different name under which a journal has been published as a separate title in their journal title count. Thus, if a content provider counts only the current titles represented in a package, that provider's title count could be as much as 20% lower than the number of journals a library would consider the package to contain, were all former title names separately listed and indexed. Alignment between how libraries identify and count titles and how publishers and vendors identify and count them would seem to be in everyone's best interest both from a research as well as a marketing perspective.

The Content Provider's Perspective

At a NASIG workshop in 2008, Bob Boissy (Director, Network Sales, Springer) pointed out that editors vary in their perspectives on how to present articles from journals whose titles have changed over time. Some editors feel the content is more marketable if it is presented under the current title. It is probably also the case that placing all the content under the current title seems to product managers and website designers to be a simpler and more elegant arrangement than breaking the content into the various pieces that placing it under multiple changed titles might entail. This is where a best practices document could serve an educational function by pointing out the consequences of placing older articles under current titles. Not all content providers employ librarians, and not all those who make decisions about how to present their content think to consult librarians.



Alignment between how libraries identify and count titles and how publishers and vendors identify and count them would seem to be in everyone's best interest both from a research as well as a marketing perspective.

What Are the Issues?

- 1 **Titles for Different Formats.** All journal websites include some kind of title. If there is a print version of the journal, identification and access to both versions are enhanced if the title is presented in exactly the same way on both. However, sometimes publishers seem to want to create a fresh identity for the online version, for example by adding the word "online" or "electronic," or perhaps by using a logo or initials on the website that do not appear on the print version. This may or may not be a great marketing approach; but if confusion results and if users are unable to determine whether they have found the journal they are seeking, how great is that?
- 2 **Former Titles.** Any journal that is published over a long period of time is likely—sooner or later—to change its title. The scope of the publication might change over time, or the number of good articles submitted for consideration might improve to the point where two parts are created, each bearing its own title. Another possible factor is that names and interests of sponsoring associations often transform over time. Editors come and go, even if one of them is lucky enough to enjoy an extremely long and notable tenure. In each of these cases, the publisher, sponsor, or editor may wish to modify the title of the journal or to change it altogether.

CONTINUED »



REWRITING HISTORY

Citations need to be historically accurate; they need to cite the title that the journal carried at the time when the article was published. And all areas of websites that aggregate journal content need to consistently represent journal titles along with the dates those journals were published under those titles.

When a journal title is modified or changed entirely, history is not completely rewritten. The publication has already likely been issued over a number of years with the previous title. Most journals or periodicals of any importance will have been indexed in one or more major abstracting and indexing (A&I) services. Articles have almost surely been cited in books and in other articles—using the title of the journal at the time the article was published. The heaviest use of an article can be expected in the first years after publication, so the number of citations under the original title will likely be high. The publisher cannot wave a magic title change wand that somehow replaces the old title with the new one on any print issues or bound serial volumes that might still exist in many libraries. Even if the article was only issued in an online form, the publisher cannot ensure that citations will be changed in every A&I database or in each citation in each book and journal article that referenced that article under its original journal title.

That being the case, information about, and easy access to, the older title needs to be provided on the website for the new title. It is important that information about the former title be presented with enough prominence on the website to be easily visible and well enough indexed to be accessible via a search engine. There are at least a couple of good ways that tracking former titles can be handled, but the pressing point here is that former titles cannot be swept under the rug.

3 Citations. When users retrieve articles from an online journal, it is increasingly common for them to also retrieve a citation information page that indicates how the article should be cited. Unfortunately, these citation pages often recommend the journal's current title rather than the title that appeared on the journal at the time when the article was published. This is another attempt to rewrite history and one that is doomed to

failure because all the former citations can never be corrected. It is also a practice that will result in ongoing failures—failure of users to find articles.

A final irony is that if the researcher employs the suggested citation title (i.e., the current title of the journal) rather than the journal title at the time the article was first published, ongoing confusion will result: a future researcher will find the article—the same author(s) and the same article title—listed as appearing in two different journals published in the same year. And when the journal inevitably changes title yet again at some future date, the very same article that already appears to have been published in two different journals in one year will end up being cited as having been published in yet a third journal. What kind of contribution to scholarship is this? The infrastructure of scholarly citation will become ever more littered with wrecked searches!

Citations need to be historically accurate; they need to cite the title that the journal carried at the time when the article was published. And all areas of websites that aggregate journal content need to consistently represent journal titles along with the dates those journals were published under those titles.

4 ISSN. Even if publishers and other content providers, as well as the editors and product managers associated with these entities, become aware of the need to align content under the correct titles, how can they know the correct title sequences, dates, and ISSN? Access to the ISSN Portal, the database of ISSN registrations available from the ISSN International Centre, can often provide this information, with each separate title having its own record, ISSN, and publication dates as well as links to former and later titles. ISSN centers can also usually provide help in resolving questions or interpreting complex relationships.

Consequences of Omitting Former Titles

What happens when former titles are omitted altogether even while the content is present on the website? As we have seen with the frustrated undergraduate described in the introduction to this article, those online issues under the old title will be effectively lost, much as mis-shelved journal volumes in a library cannot reasonably be found and used. Needlessly unsatisfied and frustrated users are probably the worst consequence.

However, in today's economic environment, there are additional negative consequences. Libraries have had to become extremely discriminating about purchases, and they have to choose among many products those which represent the best value for the funds they still have to spend. Libraries and services that work with them, such as the various electronic publications access management services and A&I services, need to be made aware that content providers offer access to many more titles than they now claim to do since earlier titles are not presented separately, not indexed under the old title, and not included in total title counts. This is surely a missed marketing opportunity! By providing prominent access to former titles, publishers, vendors, and libraries can legitimately claim higher numbers of titles and have better value in the packages they are selling or purchasing.

Further serious consequences that result from lack of access to or indexing of former titles relate to machine access, machine matching and processing, and the flow of information along the serials supply chain. Many academic institutions rely on link servers/link resolvers to connect users with journal articles by using the metadata in Open URLs (ANSI/NISO Z39.88). Journal title and ISSN are key elements of OpenURL metadata; if the source citation (as represented by OpenURL metadata) and the knowledgebase identify the same content with different journal titles and ISSN, then the corresponding target links will not be offered to the user. Once again, expensive content that a library has paid for will not be served to a researcher, even though that content has been licensed and should be available to its users.

The problems caused by some databases and services not listing content under the original title, while others do, ripple throughout the serials information and supply chain: information coming from some electronic publications management services does not match information coming from others, or does not match information from A&I databases. In addition to causing user confusion and failed searches, these mis-matches also cause library staff to spend time trying to determine which information is correct. Everyone suffers—most of all, the researcher and the library budget.

CONTINUED »



By providing prominent access to former titles, publishers, vendors, and libraries can legitimately claim higher numbers of titles and have better value in the packages they are selling or purchasing.

What Best Practices Are Already Available?

Are there any standards or best practices already available that relate to the presentation of journals on websites? Some relevant resources are the following:

➔ **Best Practices for Ejournals: Publication and Website Design Guidelines**, a web document created by Ann Ercelawn, a serials cataloger at Vanderbilt University. This brief set of practice guidelines offers three points related to title presentation and title changes, as well as several other useful tips.

➔ A report on a **NISO/NFAIS workshop** held in Philadelphia on February 20, 2000 on **Best Practices for Electronic Journals** and a summary article about the workshop written by Priscilla Caplan for the Jan. 2000 issue (v. 17, no. 5) of *Library Hi Tech*. While much of this information seems quite dated in 2009, there are some basic tenets that still apply, particularly in the section reporting on the viewpoint of the library.

➔ **Serial Publications: Guidelines to Good Practice in Publishing Printed and Electronic Journals (2nd edition)** by Diane Brown, Elaine Stott and Anthony Watkinson. Association of Professional and Learned Society Publishers, January 2003.

➔ **NISO's Knowledge Base And Related Tools (KBART) Working Group** is working on issues that are related to the presentation of journals on publisher websites, but their focus is on smoother interaction and exchange of data between members of the knowledge base supply chain.

➔ A report by Deberah England on a 2008 NASIG (North American Serials Interest Group) conference presentation by Les Hawkins, Regina Reynolds, and Steven C. Shadle entitled “**Journal Title Display and Citation Practices**” published in *The Serials Librarian*, v. 56 (2009), pp. 271-281. The presentation

in question, which was conceived after some exchanges on the serials discussion list SERIALST, reviews and illustrates many of the issues presented here, including examples of websites that do list all current and former titles.

Given the brevity, age, or relative inaccessibility of some of the above resources (e.g, the book by Brown et al. is only available in print and costs \$75), the time seems right to develop and publicize a best practices document. NISO has expressed interest in sponsoring a working group to tackle this and related presentation issues.

Next Steps

A core group of individuals—Les Hawkins and Hien Nyugen (Library of Congress), Regina Reynolds (US ISSN Center), Steve Shadle (University of Washington) and Cindy Hepfer (University at Buffalo)—are issuing invitations to several publishers, platform providers, and public access management service providers to work with them to develop a NISO proposal. If that proposal is accepted, a call will go out for additional interested individuals from both libraries and the commercial sector, but especially the latter, to participate in discussions and to develop draft guidelines. Anyone wishing to express interest in this work should contact Karen Wetzel, NISO's Standard Program Manager (kwetzel@niso.org). | FE | doi: 10.3789/isqv21n2.200902

REGINA ROMANO REYNOLDS <rrey@loc.gov> is ISSN Coordinator at the Library of Congress in Washington, DC.

CINDY HEPFER <hslcindy@buffalo.edu> is Continuing Resources Cataloging Team Leader, State University of New York at Buffalo Libraries in Buffalo, NY.

RELEVANT LINKS



Best Practices for Ejournals:
(Ann Ercelawn)
www.library.vanderbilt.edu/ercelawn/bestpractices.htm

ISSN International Centre
www.issn.org

Journal Title Display and Citation Practices
(Hawkins, et al)
www.informaworld.com/smpp/content-content=a909530893-db=all-order=page

KBART Working Group
www.niso.org/workrooms/kbart

NISO/NFAIS workshop Best Practices for Electronic Journals (report)
www.niso.org/news/events/niso/past/ejournalswkshp6/
NISO/NFAIS workshop Best Practices for Electronic Journals (Priscilla Caplan)
www.emeraldinsight.com/Insight/viewContentItem.do?contentType=NonArticle&contentId=1489545.

OpenURL standard (ANSI/NISO Z39.88)
www.niso.org/standards/z39-88-2004/

SERIALST (Serials in Libraries Discussion Forum)
www.uvm.edu/~bmaclenn/serialst.html